

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for reducing the accumulation of triglycerides in tissues and blood comprising at least the step of administering to a human or non human animal in need thereof, as a therapeutically active agent, an effective amount of  $\beta$ -aminoisobutyric acid, an organic or inorganic salt thereof, or an ester thereof.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously Presented) A method of treatment for lowering the blood levels of triglycerides comprising at least the step of administering to a human or non human animal in need thereof, as a therapeutically active agent, an effective amount of  $\beta$ -aminoisobutyric acid, an organic or inorganic salt thereof, or an ester thereof.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The method according to claim 3 for treating or ~~preventing~~ reducing the risk of developing hypertension.
6. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) A method of treatment for lowering liver triglyceride levels comprising at least the step of administering to a human or non human animal in need thereof, as a therapeutically active agent, an effective amount of  $\beta$ -aminoisobutyric acid, ~~derivative, prodrug, metabolite or complex~~ an organic or inorganic salt thereof, or an ester thereof.
7. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The method according to claim 6 for treating or ~~preventing~~ reducing the risk of developing hepatic steatosis and related liver diseases.
8. (Currently Amended) A method for treating or reducing the risk of developing ~~an obese condition, obesity,~~ said method comprising at least the step of administering to a

human or non human animal in need thereof, as a therapeutically active agent, an effective amount of  $\beta$ -aminoisobutyric acid, an organic or inorganic salt thereof, or an ester thereof.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of treatment for ~~the reduction or inhibition of the gain of~~ reducing or reducing the risk of gaining body fat comprising at least the step of administering to a human or non human animal in need thereof, as a therapeutically active agent, an effective amount of  $\beta$ -aminoisobutyric acid, an organic or inorganic salt thereof, or an ester thereof.

10-14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein  $\beta$ -aminoisobutyric acid is of an L or D configuration or a mixture of L and D configurations.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the animal is a human.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the animal is an agricultural animal.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the animal is a domestic animal.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the animal is a laboratory animal.

20-21. (Canceled)

22. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The method according to ~~claim 20, claim 1,~~ wherein the method is for ~~the treatment and/or prevention of~~ treating or reducing the risk of developing hypertension, angina pectoris, myocardial infarction and/or hyperlipemia.

23. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The method according to ~~claim 20, claim 1,~~ wherein the method is for ~~the treatment and/or prevention of~~ treating or reducing the risk of developing hepatic steatosis, steatohepatitis and/or diabetes.

24. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The method according to ~~claim 20~~, claim 1, wherein the method is for ~~the treatment and/or prevention of the~~ treating or reducing the risk of developing syndrome X (i.e. metabolic syndrome).

25-36. (Canceled)

37. (Previously Presented) A method for reducing the fat mass in a human or non-human animal in need thereof, comprising administering thereto an effective amount of a nutritional composition comprising as a nutritional active agent an effective amount of  $\beta$ -aminoisobutyric acid, an organic or inorganic salt thereof, or an ester thereof.

38. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the ester is a lower alkyl ester.

39. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein the ester is a lower alkyl ester.

40. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the ester is a lower alkyl ester.

41. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein the ester is a lower alkyl ester.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein the ester is a lower alkyl ester.